

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 PANAMA 02951 281853Z

21

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAB-01

/058 W

----- 041363

R 281805Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7546

INFO PANCANAL

USCINCSO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PANAMA 2951

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PN

SUBJECT: PROGRAM OF MINISTRY OF GOVERNMENT AND JUSTICE

REF: PANAMA 2328

SUMMARY: NEW MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT AND JUSTICE CASTRO GIVES AS HIS MINISTRY'S FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVE CREATION OF A CONSCIOUSNESS OF CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY IN ACCORD WITH PANAMA'S CURRENT REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS. IN CATALOG OF HIS MINISTRY'S FUNCTIONS, HE PLEDGED PRISON REFORM AND ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR PENAL SYSTEM, AND ENDORSED MASS MEDIA AS TWO-WAY CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION TO REFLECT VARYING ASPECTS OF PUBLIC OPINION.

1. ALL LOCAL NEWSPAPERS FOR APRIL 21 CARRIED REPORT OF INITIAL MEETING HELD BY NEWLY-DESIGNATED MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT AND JUSTICE JORGE E. CASTRO BENDIBURG PREVIOUS DAY WITH DIRECTORS OF MASS MEDIA, PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS AND OFFICIALS OF MINISTRY. AT THIS MEETING, CASTRO SAID PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE OF MINISTRY WOULD BE PROMOTION OF A CONSCIOUSNESS OF CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY IN HARMONY WITH THE COUNTRY'S CURRENT REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 PANAMA 02951 281853Z

2. CASTRO'S STATEMENT CONSISTED LARGELY OF A CATALOGUING OF THE VARIOUS FUNCTIONS LODGED IN THE MINISTRY; HE PAID NO UNDUE ATTENTION ANY PARTICULAR POINT. HE STRESSED RATIONAL DEFINITION OF ROLE OF THE FAMILY IN PANAMANIAN SOCIETY, AND SAID MINISTRY WOULD SEEK TO REINFORCE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE AND INCREASE ITS EFFECTIVENESS (DURING HIS STATEMENT, HE WAS FLANKED BY JUDGE OF CHILDREN'S COURT AND DIRECTOR OF MINISTRY'S DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, DIGEDECOM). NOTING GUARANTEES OF PRISONERS' RIGHTS INCLUDING REHABILITATION, CONTAINED IN ARTICLE 27 OF CONSTITUTION, CASTRO ENDORSED PENAL REFORM AND INDICATED PRISON SYSTEM WOULD RECEIVE FINANCIAL SUPPORT NECESSARY TO PROVIDE HEALTHY AND HYGENIC ENVIRONMENT. CASTRO ENDORSED MASS MEDIA AS TWO-WAY CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION WHICH SHOULD REFLECT ALL ASPECTS OF PUBLIC OPINION; HE SAID HIS OFFICE WOULD BE OPEN TO FRANK DIALOG AND TO ANY SUGGESTIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS.

3. COMMENT: SPARSITY OF CASTRO'S COMMENT ABOUT DIGEDECOM IS INTERESTING AS A FURTHER ILLUSTRATION OF THE DEGREE TO WHICH THIS ONCE-AUTONOMOUS, HIGHLY VISIBLE AND INFLUENTIAL ENTITY HAS BEEN ALLOWED TO RECEDE FROM THE PUBLIC EYE RECENTLY. CASTRO IS NOT WELL-KNOWN IN PANAMA CITY; HE IS A NATIVE OF LOS SANTOS PROVINCE, WHERE HE SERVED AS GOVERNOR FROM 1969 THROUGH 1974. SINCE LEAVING LOS SANTOS, HE HAS BEEN OUT OF THE COUNTRY AS PANAMA'S AMBASSADOR TO BRAZIL. HIS REPUTATION AS GOVERNOR WAS FAIRLY GOOD, ALTHOUGH HIS STRONG SUPPORT OF LAND REFORM PROGRAMS APPARENTLY DREW SOME CRITICISM. HIS BACKGROUND AS A CATTLE RANCHER AND BUSINESSMAN LEAD MOST PEOPLE TO EXPECT HIS POLICIES TO BE MORE MODEATE THAN THOSE OF HIS PREDECSSOR; HE IS ALSO EXPECTED TO BE AN IMPROVEMENT OVER THE NOTORIOUSLY WEAK ADMINISTRATIVE PERFORMANCE OF FORMER MINISTER RODRIGUEZ. BEYOND THESE GENERAL STATEMENTS, IT IS PREMATURE TO ATTEMPT RELIABLE PROJECTION OF HIS INTENTIONS AND PROBABLY PERFORMANCE IN OFFICE.

JORDEN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: blochd0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PANAMA02951
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760162-0665
From: PANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760411/aaaaaiys.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 PANAMA 2328
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: blochd0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 JUL 2004 by MartinML>; APPROVED <28 OCT 2004 by blochd0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROGRAM OF MINISTRY OF GOVERNMENT AND JUSTICE
TAGS: PINT, PN, (CASTRO, JORGE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006